An Eſsay upon Marriage in a Letter adreſs'd to a FRIEND

Advertiſement.

THE Author of the following Poem, ſincerelie proteſts 'twas never meant to Diſobliege the Virtuous, and Beſt Natur'd of the Fair Sex, of Whom he believes, there's a competent number in the World.

He onlie Deſign'd to Obliege his Friend, who Earneſtlie Solicited him to deliver his Jaſt Thoughts on this Argument; And if at the ſame time, he hath hapn'd to Expoſe the Follies and Hypocriſie of thoſe who onlie pretend to that Bright Character, He thinks there's no great Harm done. And is onlie ſorrie, that what He ſayes is from Experience verie well pai'd for; In which, if the World won't do Him the Juſtice to believe Him, as Poet; He hopes, they will as a Gentleman.

Dear FRIEND,

'TIS talk'd which I ſcarce can think true,
Of One ſo Fam'd for Wit, and Senſe as you,
That you're reſolv'd in ſpite of Reaſon's force,
To have a Wife, for Better and for Worſe,
You haſte to Town, and are upon the wing,
To wed *Bellinda*, that Fine Tawdrie thing.
But, Sir, take heed, you've ſomewhat here to looſe,
Before you raſhly hamper i'the Nooſe.
You'd beſt adviſe what Life you mean to lead
Er'e yet you've took the *Syren* to your bed;
How like you Fetters, Sir, and Chains for Life?
To all the Pride and Clamours of a Wife?
Who dares to give you, if ye put her to't
A Courtain Lecture, with a Kick to boot?
But your, fine Miſs, you ſay, is none of theſe
An' O what! Golden Dayes do you propoſe?
She's Pious, Modeſt, Vertuous, Chaſte, Gentile
Cra'e Mercy, Sir, if ſo, 'tis very well:
But how the D---- made you thus ſo wiſe?
As to be certain, this is no Diſguiſe,

Are you ſo read in Women ; that you dare,
Pretend to make Diſcovery what They are ?
Thro' all their Artifices cloſely ſet,
For catching *Cullies* when they mean to cheat ;
They're *Cullies* all, who fondly thus admire
The Triffling Paltry Sex.
By this perhaps you'l think me too ſevere,
Upon your Charming *Phillis*, But I fear ;
E're ſix months end, you'l have another ſenſe
Of what you now term rude impertinence;
Women are riddles, known but to a few,
Who cloſſe ſearch, and more intenſlie view
Their Inmoſt Natures with Impartial Eye ,
And are not Brib'd by Loves Cajollorie.
How many things will She pretend and ſay,
That you, not ſhe, muſt only have the ſway;
That tho' you are her Humble Servant new,
She muſt when ty'd, change ſtations ſtrai't with you
In all things ſhe'l obey, nor muſt ſhe owne
Another Lord, beſides your ſelf alone,
ch Tales, Sir, makes you Eager to poſſeſs,
A Life whoſe Miſchiefs you can ne're Redreſs
Tho' now you're bigg with fanci'd Hapineſs ,
You had ſome Reaſon, here I muſt allow,

Of

If what she now pretends, she mean't for true,
Believe me, Sir 'Tis none of her Designe
She must Command, when once she calls you mine
Since wheedling *Eve*, yet never Woman was,
Who did not think to make her Husband Ass,
Glencarvics Man, or some such useful Tool,
And often times a Cuckald or a Fool.
But if you're own good Fortune you intend
You'll once consider with Me as a Friend,
And if you wou'd not think, and judge by ha'ves
You'l then thro' off these chains which thus bereaves
Men of their Sense, and make 'em Womens Slaves
And state your self, as an unbayas'd Man.
Then muster all the Reasons that you can
I'll then lay down my Sense oppos'd to yours;
And thus let's enter into grave Discourse,
Upon this Weighty Point:
Then pray consider some few Ills which Fate
Path link't inseparably to Married State
The loss of Children, thousand anxious Cares
How to provide them All, perplexing Fears
And Matrimoniall Musick, grates your Ears;
The Nurses Caterwau'ling, Bawling Titts
Enuff to fright a Man out of his Witts
Besides the jangling of the Female Crew
These things I take it, *Friend* don't sute with you
Your Temper's pleasant, Merry, and Jocose:

If her's be Freakiſh, Chagrin, or Meroſe
And apt to jealouſie, pray till you be ſick;
But you'd as well take up with good old *Dick*
As thus to live in ſuch confounded ſtriſe:
With One who'l act, the fury more than wife?
When ſhe puts on ſome Dull and Surly Mood
Looks very Staunch, imperiouſly and proud
What wou'd you think if then you had a Mind
To pay a Husbands *Duty*, and be kind,
To be Debarr'd tho' n're ſo much Inclin'd
Until ſhe find A Guſto for the Sport,
Has ta'ne the fit, and is diſpoſed for't.
You muſt not think ſhe'l minde your caſe ſince now,
'Tis her ſelf, She means to pleaſe not you;
Such things you'l ſay provock to quite the Road,
Where ever where, your hedg'd, and peep Abroad,
For ſome on whom you may diſcharge the Load;
But, *Sir*, tho' here's a Burden more Severe,
Than We or Our fore-Fathers er'e Cou'd bear.
Yet muſt you be Content to be Refus'd,
By one ſo far beneath you thus Abus'd.
For ſhould you urge too much your'e StraitDiſpiſ'd?
Kick't off with Scorn, and Baſely Tantaliz'd?
Was ever Mortal Wight yet more Accurſt?
Nor can you help't, tho' both your C----s ſhou'd Burſt.
And tho' ſuch Inſtances, you ſay are Rare,
Yet you your ſelf have known that ſuch there are.

Who

Who Scorn, unleſs they pleaſe T'oblige ſo much,
Yet know noBounds, when once they'd have a Touch
Such are the Fruits of Marriage, Sir, a Wife;
You muſt take care to pleaſe, and Shun ſuch Strife,
As will hereafter all Contentment pall,
Unleſs you mean to part for Good and all.
But if ſhe think you cannot keep at home,
And only fancy, you Diſpoſ'd to Roame,
Tho' there be nought, by which ſhe thus can Gueſs,
Yet true or falſe, to her 'tis all a Caſe,
For if of Jealouſie, ſhe's once poſſeſt,
'Twill ne're depart from her infected Breaſt;
Each day ſhe'l watch you with a Thouſand Spies.
When theſe give out, ſhe'l order freſh Supplies,
And whereſoe're ye go, ſhe Dog's ye with her Eyes;
Till by ſuch Treatment your'e provock't at laſt
Of the *Forbidden Fruit* to take a Taſte;
For having none, Since ſhe found Cauſe before,
Your'e juſtly now provockt to give her more;
For nought Suits worſe with Men, then harſh Reſtraint,
They fancy't Hell to be thus cloſely Pen't
But tho' ſuch things you now have quite forbore,
And ſhe to Pardon all Devotly Swore.
Her Oaths and Vows I value not a Pinn,
Nought can Atone the Impardonable Sin,
When once Dire Jealouſie begins to Stur,
A Nod, a Word, a Look's Enuff for her,

For

For all your hop'd for Calmness yet prepare,
And Arm your self for Everlasting War;
Dread *Scilla's* Waves 'tis Safer to Enagage,
And Trust a Storme, then her Destructive Rage.
Not Waves Contending with the Bowsterous wind,
Threaten so Loud us her Tempesteous Mind;
For Seas Grow Calm and Rageing Storms Abate,
But most Implacable's a Womans Hate,
Like some Black Threatning Cloud she'l still Discharge,
Scolding like Peals of Thunder in your Ears.
Till with the Hellish Jargon your'e so Stunn'd,
In vain you'l wish, you had for ever shun'd.
This Cursed Leaky kind, and on you go,
Wreaking your Spite on all the Babling Crew.
Cursing the Priest that Ty'd the fatal Knot,
And that Black day, that made a Wife your Lot;
Th' Eternal Clack of whose Loud Bauling Tongue,
Will make you Pray you had that Minute Hung;
Which first Betrayed you to her Treacherous Charms,
And thus Engaged you in World of Harms.
But what are these say you, a puny word,
Is far below a Gentlemans Regard.
But to be Cheated, Bang'd, Divorc't that's more:
Why never Woman us'd Man so before.
And if you Wa'n't my friend, I'de say 'twere false
But Sir, 'tis very true ask *F*.... *s* Else,
Who lately to his Cost hath found it so;

And

And Swears that Miſchief ne're was hatch'd below,
Which, once provock't, a Woman dar's not do.
By fraud ſhe'l ſize your *Fortune*, then Trapane
You out of All; And bid you *Starve* or *Hang*;
Regardleſs of your Honour, *Fame* or *State*
Contrives all Wayes to make You Deſperate!
This cur'ſt *Alecto*, Scorns yet to give o're
Till ſublimated Spit, can think no more.
This *Finiſh'd* Woman, throughout Hell Renown'd,
Is moſt her ſelf, when moſt with Miſchief Crown'd
But, if your Spouſe ſhou'd prove a Miſs of Game,
Which Seldom ſails ſince all the kind are Tame.
When Handſomely Attackt ſhe'l Change her Courſe,
And with her female Craft Allay the force;
Of your Inrag'd, and yet too eaſie Mind,
And ſeem to be Superlatively kind
A thouſand Wylie *Tricks* ſhe'l uſe, and Spare,
No Oaths, to make you think that you're her Dear;
With ſtrange prodigious flatteries yet Careſs,
And ſeem *Tranſported* with your Loath'd Embrace:
If yet ſuch Wheedles Can't gain her Intent,
She'l then put on Religion; Act the Saint.
O how Demurlie will ſhe Sigh and Pray,
Lyke *Pennanc'd Cordelier*, on holy Day.
Then Loudly Raill at all the Ogling Beaus
Who ſtrive to Lead poor Women by the Noſe
Till they've ſuck't in the fatall Poiſonous Doſe.

Which when but got they're Blindly Hurried on,
Till they too late perceive themselves undon
Then lift her hand with an Affected sigh,
And Swear she'd chuse a Thousand times to dye
Then once to break the Sacred Marriage tye
In short, all ways of treachery she'l pursue
That may Conceal her Amorous Thifts from you
And Bubble you into a fond Belief;
That she's a Virtous, Chaste and Honest Wife;
She may be so, but Faith 'tis two to one
That whan you thus Believe you're i'the wrong.
Well, She's a Wife, Good Natur'd, Chaste, and Fair,
Or Else 'tis hard if no such things there are;
Then Sir, I'll tell you what I'de have you do,
You'd best Expose her to the wondring Crew,
Like *Affrick* Monsters for a Rarie show.
For I cou'd hold a Guinea to a Crown,
You shan't find a dozen such in Town.
'Twere Endless, Sir, to tell the Numerous Tricks,
Peculiar to this fine Bewitching Sex.
Let it suffice at present that you know,
To Shun these Rocks that must Creat your Woe;
If you bethink not well, and think agen,
Before you enter on the Tragick Scene.
But you intent on Wiveing strait Reply,
Dare you Blaspheme the Mighty Mistery;
Of Sacred Wedlock, first by Heaven Design'd
For Propogation of belov'd Mankind.
Since such a Mighty Boon to him was given,

While he Remain'd great favorite of Heav'n
Nought i'the whole Creation beside,
*M*ight give Content to *Adam* save his Bride.
Of all the Creatures on Earth's Theatre,
for God-like Beauty, none Compair'd to her;
VVhom when the Ravish'd Prince had once Espy'd,
Claſping her Round, beſt part of me, he Cry'd;
Enjoy the whole world's vaſt Empire with me,
for thy Dear ſake, I forefite all my Libertie.
He Clings, ſhe Clip's him to her Amorous Breaſt;
Deareſt ſaid he, Lets here Suppinly reſt;
Let's here Enjoy each other without Controul,
I Cou'd in thee infuſe my very Soul;
This Tyrranous Pleaſure Damps all other bliſs,
I'l even my *Eden* Gladly quite for this.
For this, what you impoſe, I can't recall,
Tho' it coſt me my GOD, my Heaven, and All!
Thus ſpoke the Prince with utmoſt tranſport driv'n,
While he poſſeſt the Greateſt gift of Heaven
Hold, Sir, At once you ve ſaid Enuff; I'm ſure
Upon this Baneſull *Primitive Amour*,
Enuff I think indeed to Tame the World,
Was not the *Uxorious Wretch* from Par'dice hurl'd?
And juſtly by his Great Creator curſt;
'Cauſe thus from Beſt he had bow'd down ro worſt.
Since which ſad Doom poor Man hath ramely bore
To be a Drudge, where he was Lord before.

Cruel

Cruel, Reverse! What curſed bargain's this?
To truck a mighty Kingdom for a kiſs
A Kingdom of ſuch vaſt ſtupendious Bliſs:
O! this great Bliſs the fool's himſelf diveſt,
By fondly Lolling on a VVomans breaſt;
O! this he all's vaſt progeny muſt Rob,
for joy of ſuch a Carnal Naſty Job;
VVhich he might had at a far meaner price,
Had he but known himſelf, and had been wiſe;
Inglorious Man is now reſtor'd, its true;
But what, pray Sir, does all this make for you?
Sure from th'extent of the Almightie's Grace,
Your Arguments for Marriage have no place:
Marriage was mean't for Earth's poor drudging ſlaves:
To furniſh freſh Supplies for Age and Graves,
Grace is diſpenc't upon a Nobler Score
That Man his great Creator might adore,
And ne're to mind that Toy a woman more:
But Rebell Man on this falſe thing muſt doat,
Tho' he and all he's worth ſhou'd go to pot:
From whence 'tis plain that what was Mans firſt bliſs
It now turn'd to his VVreck and greater Curſe:
Since when, no Villanie ere was acted here,
In which curſt Woman has not bore a ſhare:
But we muſt wed, or elſe the VVorld muſt dye,
And ſo you'l argue for neceſſity,
Or Chain of ſecond Cauſes, than ſay I:

From

From such like Topicks you'd defend all VVars,
Unjustest Broils, and Bloodiest Massacres:
And whatsoe're else by Heavens just Decree,
Serves but to lop the Worlds Luxuriancie;
At present, Sir, 'tis none of my intent
Thus to engage you in so nice a point:
As *Providence*, or the Divine Decree,
In this one thing; yet hope you will agree
Tho Marriage be of necessary use;
Yet your particular Case pleads no excuse;
Since you're endu'd with *Parts*, and Manly Sense,
To all that's fine, you justly have pretence,
Why in the name of madness then wou'd you
To that false silly Thing, a Woman bow?
And for a fond imaginary Joy,
All that's true Happiness at once destroy:
Let poor dull thoughtless Fop's themselves befool;
And by the duller name of Husband Rule:
Like Bedlam Kings with painted Scepters sway,
And fancy to themselves a Monarchy
Yet to their Soveraign Dames all homage pay
Let such tame Fools be wretchedly confin'd,
To truckle to the pride of Woman kind
While wiser you, Lord of your self remain:
And the Vile Servile Yoak, with scorn *Disdain*.

FINIS.